

THURSDAY MORNING, 21 AUGUST 1980

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21 AUGUST 1980

Pg 2

Soviets pushing work on 'death ray,' Pentagon says

WASHINGTON POST 21 AUGUST 1980 Pg 1

**Change in Nuclear Target Policy
Not a Radical One, Brown Says**By George C. Wilson
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Carter's much-publicized new nuclear targeting guidelines are designed to underscore for Moscow that any kind of a nuclear attack on the United States or its allies would be a losing proposition, Defense Secretary Harold Brown said yesterday in the administration's first speech on the subject.

Presidential Directive 59, signed by Carter on July 25, "is not a new strategic doctrine, not a radical departure from U.S. strategic policy over the past decade or so," said Brown in a speech at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I.

Carter's targeting guidelines are basically a commitment to deploy a more versatile, less vulnerable nuclear offensive force—one that could wage a big or little war if Moscow chose to start one. Anything from Soviet cities to a lone missile complex could be hit under the more flexible targeting.

Brown denied that the president was thereby taking the nation into a new twilight zone of nuclear policy, as some critics have contended.

All Carter did, Brown insisted, was codify "the same essential strategic doctrine" in a way that takes into account "current conditions and current capabilities," including Soviet perceptions about winning a nuclear war and U.S. weaponry capable of denying that option to the Kremlin.

At a separate Pentagon briefing on the doctrine, a defense official who could not be identified under the ground rules acknowledged that there was an argument within the administration about issuing such a directive at all.

He further conceded election-year politics helped weight the case for issuing Presidential Directive 59.

The Carter administration has made a number of defense policy decisions in recent months, many of them reversals of past positions, which puts the president in a stronger position to combat Republican standard-bearer Ronald Reagan on the national security issue.

Brown, who is taking a leading role in defending Carter's military policies in this election campaign, yesterday tried to assure critics of the "refined" nuclear policy that keeping Moscow's finger off the button was still the central objective: that the administration was not threatening to attack the Soviet Union first.

But rather than let Moscow believe the United States was muscle-bound by an all-or-nothing-at-all nuclear policy that would force an American president to tolerate some kind of limited nuclear attack by the Soviet Union, Brown said, Carter was "serving notice that our arsenal could combat Russia's in kind, if necessary."

"Deterrence must restrain a far wider range of threats than just massive attacks on U.S. cities," said Brown. "Our strategic forces also must deter nuclear attacks on smaller sets of targets in the United States or

on U.S. military forces, and be ~~new~~ against nuclear coercion of, or attack on, our friends and allies."

"We must have forces, contingency plans and command and control capabilities that will convince the Soviet leadership that no war and no course of aggression by them that led to use of nuclear weapons—on any scale of attack and at any stage of conflict—could lead to victory, however they may define victory," said Brown.

This requires a "countervailing strategy" that puts "more stress on being able to employ strategic nuclear forces selectively, as well as by all-out retaliation in response to massive attacks on the United States."

"It is our policy," continued Brown, "and we have increasingly the means and the detailed plans to carry out this policy, to ensure that the Soviet leadership knows that if they chose some intermediate level of aggression we could by selective, large (but still less than maximum) nuclear attacks exact an unacceptably high price in the things the Soviets appear to value most: political and military control, military force both nuclear and conventional and the industrial capability to sustain a war."

Besides having weapons accurate and powerful enough to blow up Soviet leaders hiding underground, command posts and destroying factories, the United States arsenal still could blow up cities, Brown said.

In short, the defense secretary said, the United States is deploying a versatile nuclear offense and issuing secret targeting instructions for carrying out the various options.

"This is not a first-strike strategy," Brown said. "We are talking about what we could and, depending on the nature of a Soviet attack, would do in response to a Soviet attack."

"Nothing in the policy contemplates that nuclear war can be a deliberate instrument of achieving our national security goals, because it cannot be."

"In declaring our ability and our intention to prevent Soviet victory" over the full spectrum of nuclear warfare, Brown said, "we have no illusions about what a nuclear war would mean for mankind. It would be an unimaginable catastrophe."

The defense secretary, in advancing the timetable made in previous statements, said the Soviets may already have warheads accurate enough to blow up U.S. Minuteman missiles in underground silos.

"That potential has been realized or close to it," said Brown in his prepared text. The Pentagon previously had projected missile busting capability for the Soviets in the early 1980s.

The growing vulnerability of stationary land missiles is at the heart of Carter's case for building an MX missile that moves from shelter to shelter covertly so Soviet gunners could never be sure of knocking it out of action.

"The increase in Soviet strategic capability over the past decade," said

WASHINGTON (UPI)—The Soviet Union is expending much more effort than the United States to develop a futuristic "death ray" weapon, but is still far from achieving the goal, a top Pentagon official says.

"They certainly are investing far more in their research and development effort than we are," said William Perry, undersecretary of defense for research and engineering.

Perry declined to estimate how much money the Soviet Union is investing in the effort to turn lasers and charged particle beams into operational weapons.

"I can only guess at the number," Perry said. "But it's several factors larger [than the U.S. program]. It's not 50 per cent more or 60 per cent more. It's three or four times as much, I would estimate."

PERRY COMMENTED following a series published by the magazine *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, which asserted that the Soviet Union had developed a demonstration weapon. The magazine published an artist's conception of the ray weapon allegedly based on classified reconnaissance photographs.

"I don't believe they have operational weapons of any significance," Perry said. "We have a laser, for example, that could be used as a weapon in a demonstration sense, and they may have, too."

"But that's very far removed in both time and resources from what would be required for anything like a laser or particle beam that could be mounted in a satellite or put on a ship or in an airplane and used as an operational weapon."

"Any large fixed experimental facility could have the potential of being used as a demonstration weapon if you could bring the targets to that facility."

MEANTIME, the Pentagon released an illustrated seven-page fact sheet on the U.S. high-energy laser program. The program calls for \$199 million to be spent on research in 1981, compared with \$168.7 million in 1980.

The fact sheet said: "We believe that we understand the technical issues basic to translating high-energy laser technology into weapons systems, that our decision is correct to keep the program limited in scope, and that the Soviets may be moving prematurely to weapon systems."

"However, we are continually conducting a careful review of our program, as well as watching Soviet progress with great interest, in a continuing re-evaluation of this decision."

The Air Force plans to carry out experiments later this year at Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico to demonstrate the feasibility of shooting down missile targets with an airplane-based laser.

Brown, "and our concern that the Soviets may not believe that nuclear war is unwinnable, dictate a U.S. need for more, and more selective, retaliatory options."

The Federation of American Scientists issued a statement yesterday terming the Carter nuclear doctrine "a step backwards" and asked for a declassified version of Presidential Directive 59.

The group's executive committee said the emphasis on the ability to knock out Soviet missiles with MX warheads together with the announced warning that Soviet command centers may be attacked encourages the Soviet Union to take a "hair-trigger" approach to nuclear war. "Nothing could be more subversive of our security," said the committee.

THURSDAY MORNING, 21 AUGUST 1980

BALTIMORE SUN 21 AUGUST 1980 Pg. 5

Soviet sub catches fire, refuses aid from Japanese

Tokyo (AP)—A Soviet nuclear submarine caught fire and radioed for help today about 85 miles east of Okinawa, but Japanese authorities said it refused help from aircraft and a patrol boat that sped to the scene.

The Maritime Safety Agency said it had confirmed there were at least nine persons dead and three injured aboard the vessel. It was identified as the Echo 1 class, equipped with missiles and normally carrying a crew of about 100, based at the Soviet Siberian port of Vladivostok.

A Japanese helicopter reported from the scene that about 50 crewmen were on the deck of the surfaced submarine, waving flags. There was no sign of fire on board, the report said.

The safety agency said that when a pa-

troil boat reached the stricken vessel, the captain refused Japanese aid. The agency said he had radioed for assistance by a Soviet vessel, indicating that the immediate danger had passed.

It said a Soviet ship was expected to arrive at the scene in a few hours, but gave no details.

Initial assistance had been provided by a British freighter identified as the Gary, which was in the area when the submarine called for help about 6:40 a.m. (5:40 p.m. yesterday EDT).

The freighter was reported standing by, and had allowed the sub's captain aboard to make radio contact with Soviet authorities, the agency said. Another foreign vessel, reported to be Guatemalan, also was in the area.

BALTIMORE SUN

21 AUGUST 1980

Pg. 4

Saudi offers to feed armies in holy war over Jerusalem

Jidda, Saudi Arabia (Reuters)—An 80-year-old Saudi millionaire has offered to finance all the food requirements of Arab and other Muslim armies if they fight a holy war for Jerusalem and Israeli-occupied territories, the English-language paper *Arab News* reported yesterday.

The paper said Sheikh Hassan Abbas Sharbatli, a former honorary minister of state, was offering his multimillion-dollar resources in support of Crown Prince Fahd's call earlier this month for a holy war to secure an independent Palestinian state.

Sheikh Sharbatli, once a close associate of King Abdul Aziz, founder of Saudi Arabia, already provides about \$30,000 a month to help rebels fight Soviet troops and the Soviet-backed government in Afghanistan, the paper said.

BROWN -- CONTINUED

that any or all of the components of Soviet power can be struck in retaliation, not only their urban industrial complex," he said.

The central premise of the change appears to be that the Soviet Union had adopted or is considering a policy that it can fight and win a nuclear war through combined use of its nuclear and conventional forces.

Evidence of this so-called "war-fighting" policy is seen in Soviet military literature, in its ambitious civil defense program and in its new nuclear weaponry, much of which appears to be aimed at knocking out U.S. missiles as well as hardened military and civilian command structures.

"The Soviet leadership appears to contemplate at least the possibility of a relatively prolonged exchange if a war comes, and in some circles at least, they seem to take seriously the theoretical possibility of victory in such a war. We cannot afford to ignore these views — even if we think differently, as I do," said Brown.

Brown said the United States has "no illusions about what a nuclear war would mean for mankind. It would be an unimaginable catastrophe."

The secretary touted two new U.S. missile systems that will allow the United States to precisely target hardened Soviet missiles and other key systems — the MX missile and the cruise missile programs.

Both, he said, are needed to modernize parts of the so-called "triad" force of nuclear weapons system — bombers, submarines and land-based ICBMs.

Defense officials said yesterday that U.S. missile silos containing the Minuteman ICBM systems are being targeted by more accurate Soviet warheads at a somewhat faster pace than was foreseen a year ago. Between now and the mid-1980s, they said, the Soviets will gain the ability to knock out most of the hardened, land-based ICBMs.

By the mid-1980s, they estimate, the Soviets may have perfected a new airborne radar system that would make it extremely difficult for the nation's B-52 bomber force to penetrate Soviet borders.

JETS -- CONTINUED

ing to officials, are absorbed into the special coating and then diffused so that they cannot be picked up by tracking stations.

Because the Soviet Union possesses the most extensive air defense network in the world, experts contend that the techniques worked out with the new aircraft would be most useful in designing a new manned, strategic bomber.

Other officials, however, contended that even if the United States could dramatically reduce the radar visibility of combat aircraft, the Soviet Union would be able to defend its air space from intrusion. They noted, for example, that Soviet fighters are equipped with infrared homing missiles that zero in on the heat produced by the jet engines of aircraft. They also said the Soviets could work to improve their radar.

The Armed Forces Journal article, written by editor Benjamin Schlemmer, said: "Since early 1978, the United States has been test flying several versions of virtually invisible new airplanes, both in manned and unmanned versions, in a highly classified 'stealth' program.

"The general techniques (to hide the planes) apparently involve: special shaping or contouring of the aircraft's structure; non-metallic materials that absorb electromagnetic energy or cause such a weak return of it for the signal to be ambiguous or almost undetectable; infrared shielding of an aircraft's engine exhaust and other 'hot spots'; special paints to absorb, deflect and shroud signals . . . and electronic techniques and countermeasures to generate false returns which show a plane's position far away from the plane's actual flight path."

Although hundreds of millions of dollars a year are being spent on the program, it said, only about 10 congressional officials have been privy to details of it and no U.S. allies have been briefed about it.

STRATEGY -- CONTINUED

getting strategy, Mr. Brown said the effort and money invested in the missile to make it invulnerable show that the United States plans its forces for retaliation against attack—not for launching so-called first strikes.

In a Sunday television interview, Mr. Brown said the Carter administration would not propose a new bomber during the presidential campaign, as some published reports have predicted. He went a step further yesterday.

"We are continuing to develop the technology and to do the design work on a new cruise missile carrier aircraft and a new bomber" against a possible need in the 1990s, he said. On Sunday he had spoken of "paper designs."

To be ready for the 1990s, other officials say, bomber development would have to begin fairly soon, and may be proposed in the next budget.

The essence of the nuclear targeting policy that has caused such a flap here and in Moscow is that U.S. nuclear weapons are pointed at a broad range of military forces and political command centers as well as Soviet city and industrial complexes.

This has long been true, as Moscow doubtless knows from the official record of the past decade. But the options now are being widened.

"The increase in Soviet strategic capability over the past decade and our concern that the Soviets may not believe that nuclear war is unwinnable," Mr. Brown said, "dictate a U.S. need for more—and more selective—retaliatory options."

Both the targeting plans and the modernization of strategic forces, he said, "make clear our understanding that the surest way to avoid a war is to insure that the Soviet leadership can have no illusions about what such a war would mean for Soviet state power and for Soviet society."

The rise of Soviet strategic power has increasingly made the threat of city-busting retaliation less believable as a deterrent, in the view of many analysts, and Mr. Brown emphasized yesterday the need for a "fully credible" range of responses to attacks at all levels.

The United States, he said, must deter not only attacks on its own cities but strikes on smaller targets, on military forces and on friends and allies.

There is "no contradiction" between focusing on how a war might be fought and insuring peace through mutual, or superpower, deterrence, he said. Deterrence, he went on, means "shaping Soviet views" on what losses would be suffered from nuclear aggression.

The United States has no "first strike strategy" in mind, the secretary said. It knows "nuclear war [cannot] be a deliberate instrument of achieving our national security goals." But it cannot risk that Soviet leaders "might entertain the illusion that nuclear war could be an option." It must accordingly be prepared to respond, at whatever level of attack, and thus, it is hoped, to prevent what would be an "unimaginable catastrophe."

As for containing an arms race, Mr. Brown put in a new plea for SALT II ratification. The treaty, set aside after the Afghanistan invasion, would put ceilings on nuclear arms on both sides, he said, and ease defense planning because the Soviet threat would then be more predictable.